DESCENDANTS OF JOHN HOFF

Don Norman

1.JOHN HOFF

At least three histories state that John Hoff migrated to America before the Revolutionary War, and settled on Lost Creek, Harrison County VA, just before or just after the Revolution. One of these histories states that he was a soldier in the American Revolution. All these histories read as though they had been written from the same background material and the only offical record, the 1850 U.S. Census of Harrison County, Virginia, fails to confirm them.

One of the histories was probably written from a verbal account and the following accounts researched from the first written account. The 1850 Harrison County Census lists a John Hoff of 75 years of age, who was born in Pennsylvania. His wife, Mary, was listed as being 54 years of age. This is apparently a second marriage, since John's first child, Samuel Hoff, was born in 1802. William H. Bishop's History of Roane County West Virginia lists a John Hoff, son of Antony and Letita, who was born September 14, 1799 and lived in Harrison County for many years before moving to Roane County about 1855. It is quite possible that the two families have been confused, but only one John Hoffs was listed in the 1850 Harrison County Census and all sources agree that John Hoff spent most of his years on Lost Creek.

The 1850 census is probably correct, and John Hoff was probably born in Pennsylvania in 1775 and migrated to Lost Creek sometime after the birth of his son Samuel in 1802. No record of John Hoff's children other than Samuel exists, but the 1850 Census does list Solomon Hoff, born about 1809 and Bernjamin Hoff, born about 1817 as heads of families. These men are the proper ages to be John's children.

Known child of John Hoff

2. (1). Samuel b. 1802 d.Jan 8 1887

2.SAMUEL HOFF 1.JOHN HOFF5

Samuel Hoff was born in 1802, son of John Hoff. Once again, the histories are at odds with the 1850 Cenus. The histories state that Samuel was born at the Hoff Homestead on Lost Creek, Harrison County VA, while the Census lists him as being born in Pennsylvania. Although there is doubt about the place of Samuel's birth, there is no doubt that he lived almost all his life at West Milford, Harrison County. All the histories agree that West Milford was laid out by its founder, Jesse Lowther, about 1815, assisted by Samuel Hoff. There was nothing unusual about a thirteen year old apprentice surveyor in 1815. Samuel married Catharine Faris, daughter of Humphrey Faris, who epresented Harrison County in the Virginia Legislature of 1819-1820. The 1880 Census of Harrison County lists a 77 year old Samuel Hoff, whose was born in Pennsylvania and whose parents were born there. This Census lists his wife as Mary A., 52 years old, suggesting that Samuel may have remarried. Samuel Hoff died January 8, 1887 at West Milford, Harrison County, WV.

Children of Samuel and Catharine (Faris) Hoff.

3. (1). John b.Oct 9 1825 d.Aug 5 1903
m.Elizabeth Ann Gaston.

4. (2). Sarah b. 1829

5. (3). Humphrey b. 1830

6. (4). Silas b. 1831

7. (5). Rebecca b. 1837

8. (6). Lewis b. 1839

9 (7). Harriet b. 1841

10. (8). Emily b. 1843

11. (9). Malisa b. 1845

12. (10). James b. 1847

13. (11). Amy b. 1850

3.JOHN HOFF 2.SAMUEL HOFF 1.JOHN HOFF5

John Hoff, a son of Samuel and Catharine (Faris) Hoff, was born at West Milford, Harrison County, VA (WV) October 9, 1825 and died August 3, 1903 Ritchie County WV. He married Elizabeth Ann Gaston. Elizabeth, a daughter of James and Charlotte (Swisher) Gaston, was born in Harrison County in 1830 and died in Ritchie County April 25, 1905. The Gastons were of Irish descent and the Swishers (original spelling Sweitzer) of German origin. Charlotte (Swisher) Gaston spoke both English and German fluently. The 1850 Census of Harrison County lists the family:

Hoff, John	born in Virginia	Age 24 years
" , Elizabeth	"	20 "
" , Eric	"	4 "

Eric is not mentioned in later accounts and may have died a child. John must have left West Milford shortly after the Census of 1850, because Hardesty's HISTORY OF RITCHIE COUNTY, p.250 comments on his settlement on Bone Creek in that County.

"Mr. Hoff came to Bone Creek near the year 1850, and remained until his death, on August 3, 1903. He was an honest, industrious citizen, and became a large land owner. Mrs. Hoff, who was a most estimable woman, survived him but a short time, and both lie at rest in the Auburn Cemetery. The simplicity of the inscription upon the marble shaft that marks the resting place of Mr. Hoff--"Honesty is the best policy"--leaves its impress upon the visitors to this cemetery. Mr. and Mrs Hoff were the parents of eleven children that reached the years of maturity--seven sons and four daughters.

Children of John and Elizabeth Ann (Gaston) Hoff.

14. (1). Eric b. 1846 died infant?

15. (2). Eri Benton b. 1850

16. (3). Samuel I.

17. (4). Weldon b. 1861

18. (5). Mary Caroline b. 1863
m.Alvin F. Randolph

19. (6). Silas Marion b.Mar 14 1865

20. (7). Rose Byrd b. 1868

21. (8). Lewis Ros b. 1871

22. (9). Lloyd L. b. 1873

23. (10). George S.

24. (11). Charlotte C
m.W.J. Butcher

25. (12). Rebecca J.
m.E.L. Bee

26. (13). Waldo A.L.

27. (14). Nora M. died in infancy.

15.ERI BENTON HOFF 3.JOHN HOFF 2.SAMUEL HOFF 1.JOHN HOFF5

Eri Benton Hoff, a son of John and Elizabeth Ann (Gaston) Hoff, was born in 1850, either at West Milford, Harrison County VA (WV) or Bone Creek, Ritchie County VA (WV). He was a minister in the West Virginia Methodist Episcopal conference and travelled a circuit that included Rosedale, WV.

Children of Eri Benton and Melinda A. Hoff.

28. (1). Samuel A. b. 1875

29. (2). Ucal Day b. 1877

30. (3). Eloisa M. b. 1879

31. (4). Minnie Maude

32. (5). Alice Agatha b.Jun 211894 d.Oct 22 1968
m.Benjamin Franklin Miller.